Pupil Attendance Policy

FOREST VIEW SCHOOL

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Owner	BL
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Attendance Team

Ben Lyons - Headteacher and Attendance Champion
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Aims and Objectives:

At Forest View, we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, Gloucestershire County Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

All schools in the Trust are committed to ensuring that all families understand the importance of 100% attendance. Attendance in school is vital for academic success. At all key stages, studies have shown that students who attend less than 97% of the time are far less likely to achieve gateway qualifications such as 5 grade 4 and above GCSE's and therefore face more adversity and less choice in their future careers.

The Forest of Dean Trust expectation is that all students should attend the school for every session available to them (even if they are feeling unwell), unless the Headteacher has authorised the absence. This policy reflects the fact that the school cannot legally authorise any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

For these reasons, we monitor attendance patterns with vigilance and hold parents/carers to account where necessary.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before (8.45am) on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child/children.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time.
- Attend every timetabled session throughout the school day on time.

The governing body/academy trust board are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishing and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are

followed by all staff
- Having a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Working with school staff e.g., attendance officer/pastoral lead/family liaison officer/SENCo to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the attendance officer when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information to the school office no later than the time the register is closed during morning registration and no later than 13:30 in the afternoon session.

Attendance Officer and office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England)

Regulations 2024
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by *8.45am* on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken by 8.45am and will be kept open until 9:00 am.

The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 13.15pm and will be kept open until 13.20pm.

Attendance Practices at Forest View Primary School:

- Students must arrive before 08:45am; morning registers are taken at 8:45am. Afternoon registers are opened at 12:50pm and taken by 1.20pm.
- Registers are marked by 9am. Students arriving after this time will be marked as late. If lateness is a regular occurrence, the school will work with families on a case by case basis to try and improve punctuality. If further improvement is not made or the family are unable to accept the support of the school, a request to issue a penalty under the GCC/National Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.
- Morning registers are closed at 9.15am, any child arriving after this time (other than for medical reasons) will be marked as late after the register has closed –U code.
- School gates and external doors are closed/locked at 8.50am and students should enter through the school office after this time.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late (Code L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent (Code U)
- In exceptional circumstances (such as severe weather or public transport disruptions) the closing of registration may be delayed at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- Parents/carers are expected to notify the school of pupil unplanned absence before 8.45am and no later than 9.20am each day. Parents/carers should telephone the school office on the first day of absence and then each day thereafter. The school number is 01594 822241. The school will continue to contact parents/carers for a period of extended absence, even if the reason for absence is known. The school will contact parents/carers on a daily basis if they fail to inform the school of an absence
- The school must be notified of the reason for a student's absence in order to safeguard the child and protect their education and well-being.
- We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.
- If you do need to book a medical appointment during the day, we will require prior

notification and in order to authorise the leave, we will also require a copy of the appointment, in writing, email or text.

- We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- Family holidays are not usually permitted during term time. Students have 13 weeks' school holiday per year and further time off on INSET days. Leave of absence can only be granted by the Headteacher if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.
- Exceptional circumstances that are unexpected and singular events that may be unavoidable.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
- If you believe there are exceptional circumstances meaning a leave of absence should be authorised, a formal request must be made to the Headteacher, on the school's official form available from the school reception **at least 7 days before the holiday takes place**. The application must be made by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides, but the form can be brought to the school by the student. The Headteacher is unlikely to authorise leave retrospectively unless exceptional circumstances prevented prior notification
- Student absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised' when the school is not satisfied with the reasons for the absence. Continued unauthorised absence may result in a request to issue a penalty notice.
- Absence will be authorised for recognised religious observance in accordance with DfE attendance regulations
- The school takes seriously its duty to safeguard the welfare of all its students. Unexplained absences and a lack of contact from parents/carers may cause us concern and lead us to involve other agencies such as Children's Services. We will contact Children's Services within 2 days for any student with a Child Protection Plan.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (Code C1)
- Attending a medical or dental appointment (Code M)
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution (Code J1) Studying for a public examination (Code S)
- Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school (Code X)
- Compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable (Code C2)
- Exceptional circumstances *(see definition above)* (Code C)
- Parent travelling for occupational purposes – The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to required them to travel from place to place (Code T)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart (Code R)
- Illness (Code I)

Absence Procedures

In order to ensure the safety and education well-being of all students, we have a rigorous monitoring system and follow up policy when absence occurs.

Internal Stages

- On the first day of absence each academic year, the school must be notified of the reason for the absence. If we are satisfied with the reason, we will authorise the absence. If we are not satisfied, we may request evidence. If we are unsure of the authenticity of the evidence the absence will not be authorised.
- If the school becomes concerned over a student's attendance we complete a range of actions which may include, contacting other people on the child's emergency contact list, contacting other professionals that may be working with the child/the family, carrying out a home visit, contacting Police for a welfare check, starting missing child protocol.
- If we become concerned about patterns of a child's attendance the child will be spoken to by their tutor when they return to school, parents/carers will be notified either via a phone call or letter and support will be offered to improve attendance.
- Following October half term and then for the rest of the academic year letters are sent to the parents/carers of children whose attendance starts to cause concern:
- When a student's attendance falls below 96% or we have previously written home, (regardless of whether absences have been authorised or not), parents/carers are sent a Stage 1 letter by the school's Attendance Officer.
- Parents/carers will be made aware of the next stages in the procedure should their child's attendance fail to improve. The letter will offer support and a meeting if parents have concerns.
- After the Stage 1 letter, the student's attendance is monitored for up to 4 weeks. If attendance improves during the 4 week monitoring period, we will close the case and monitor in the usual way. If attendance does not improve during the 4-week monitoring period, we will send a Stage 2 letter. These letters advise parents/carers that the school may require medical evidence to support future illness absences where attendance concerns have been identified.
- will not authorise further absence for that academic year without medical evidence being provided. At this stage, the letter invites the parents/carers to attend an attendance support meeting (ASM) to discuss any challenges they face and see what support can be put in place to further support the child and family. An attendance plan will be put in place and Parents/carers will be made aware of the next stage in the procedure.
- After the Stage 2 letter, attendance is monitored for up to a further 4-week period. If there are no further absences, then no further action will be taken, but the school will monitor the student's attendance and will still require medical evidence to authorise any absence.
- After the ASM and stage 2 letter has been sent, attendance is monitored for up to a further 4 week period. If attendance is still not improving and the agreed targets set are not achieved, or the school has put in place sufficient support then the school will notify the Local Authorities Inclusion team and they may request that a Notice to improve or Penalty Notice is issued- see appendix 2 for more information. Parents/carers will be made aware of the next stage at this point.
- Where the school has closed a case following a stage 2 letter, if a student's attendance falls again, then we will write to you to invite you to attend an Attendance Support Meeting.

Promoting attendance.

- There are a number of ways that attendance is promoted across the school this includes regular updates on the school newsletter and celebration in assemblies.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels. Attendance is available for parents/carers to look at on request and is included in pupil reports.
- Monitor attendance and absence data across the school and at an individual pupil level. This is done with the headteacher and attendance officer weekly. Attendance officer then works with class teachers.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern. This is done by attendance officers and attendance champions and watch lists are provided for those at risk of becoming persistent absentees.
- Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.
- Provide regular attendance reports class teachers, pastoral lead, SENCo and the safeguarding team, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Parental meetings are held to challenge and support our parents/carers in raising the attendance of any student the school has concerns about.
- Where a student is failing to attend school, a plan will be drawn up in consultation with the family and, possibly, external agencies, this may include Education and Inclusion service, or mental health support in school or externally, a reduced timetable, consideration of any SEN and use of the graduated pathway, etc. Any support package in place will be decided on a case by case basis with the long term goal being that the child returns to a full time education in lessons.
- Students who are off school for a long period due to severe illness (evidenced) may be issued

with optional work to carry out at home to avoid falling behind. Although we do not offer flexi-schooling. Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Legal sanctions

The school must consider requesting Gloucestershire County Council issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age and the national threshold has been met. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. From August 2024, a penalty notice may be considered where there are 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period. This may include unauthorised holiday, unauthorised absence and late arrival after registers close

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period (the second one being payable at £160 with no option to reduce fine by making payment earlier). If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

Home Education

All requests for elective home education need to be placed in writing to the Headteacher. Guidance in regards to home education from GCC can be found here:

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/home-education/

Taking a Student off the Register

The Headteacher will authorise the taking of a student's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations (see Quick Guide CD RA 1 and RA3)

Children Missing from Education (CME)

The national definition of CME is:

"all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more)".

Children are at risk of becoming CME for many reasons, such as:

1. They cease to attend due to exclusion or withdrawal; removal from roll with no destination.
2. They fail to complete a transfer between providers.
3. They are offered alternative provision but fail to access this provision.
4. They have moved into the area and are not yet registered on a school roll (possibly including refugees/asylum seekers who have relocated from another authority from outside the area).

All schools in the trust have adopted Gloucestershire County Council's procedures for monitoring and reporting students who we believe are vulnerable and/or missing from education (CME).

Should the student be the subject of a Child Protection Plan, or should the school have child protection concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will immediately notify Children's Services.

We will not remove any student from our roll without consulting Gloucestershire Council School Admissions Services, and the Education Welfare Service where appropriate. It is our policy to ensure that a place has been secured and the student has enrolled at a new school before removing a student from roll when transfers take place.

Monitoring and Review

The trust will review the working of the policy and make at least annual reports to the governing board. The schools Attendance Officer will also report regularly to the governing boards and Trustees.

Appendix 1: Guide for parents on school attendance- Resources for families | Children's Commissioner for England

Appendix 2: Notices to improve and penalty notices- gcc-nti-and-pn-information.pdf